1: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
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in the diagram is the primary section of Reng, the Kong and Dhilleak divisions of which have clan nuclei of different origin to the other sections.

In all these tribes and tribal sections there is much admixture of lineages in communities. The same conditions are found in the Zeraf valley and also, and perhaps to a larger degree, in Western Nuerland. Nuer say that feuds and quarrels between lineages chiefly led to their dispersal, and they can cite many examples. Thus the descendants of Nyang-Thiang left the other sons of Thiang and joined the people with whom they form the Gaagwang tribe, and the NYARUNY lineage left their kinsmen of the Thiang primary section and joined the Reng primary section of the Gaajak tribe. After fights, a whole community, led by its dominant lineage, may in this way move to a different section or tribe and take up permanent residence with them. Migration led to further dispersal, since some lineages remained in the homeland to the west of the Nile and others crossed the Nile and Zeraf and settled to the east of these rivers. Nuer say that in the earliest stages of the migration the warriors used to raid Dinka and return home to their kinsmen after each raid. Then they settled to the east, but kept in close contact with the people of their lineage to the west. But as they shifted farther away the contact lessened and finally, in most cases, ceased altogether. When lineages migrated they must already have been nuclei of heterogeneous accretions and not exclusive groups of agnates: but admixture was no doubt hastened and made more complete by movement.

Two factors other than migration, quarrels, intermarriage, &c., have probably contributed to the dispersal of lineages. The Nuer are mainly a pastoral people with dominant pastoral interests and do not feel themselves bound by economic necessity or by ritual ties to any particular spot. Where his cattle are is the Nuer's home; his hearth is the droppings of his cattle and his altar a light pole (*rial*) which he plants wherever he may wander. The spirits which give him protection and the ancestral ghosts that watch over his welfare are no more bound to the soil than he is and they are present wherever are the herds. Beasts dedicated to ghosts and spirits are his wandering shrines. Also the Nuer have no organised cult of ancestral ghosts. The dead

• 769 are buried quickly and crudely in unvisited and unremembered tombs; only in very rare cases are sacrifices offered to them; and there are no sacred places associated with them.

[181] Thus Nuer have always felt themselves free to wander as they
613 pleased, and if a man is unhappy, his family sick, his herds de-
593 clining, his garden exhausted, his relations with some of his
607 neighbours uncongenial, or merely if he is restless, he moves to
601 a different part of the country and resides with some kinsmen. It is seldom that a man goes alone, for brothers are a corporate group and, especially if they are sons of one mother, stick together. So, frequently as a result of quarrels, a group of brothers will often leave a village and settle elsewhere. Nuer say that they usually make for the home of a married sister, where they are certain to be well received. Here they are respected as *ficiengthu*, in-laws, and their children accepted as *gaat när*, children of the mother's brother, while the people they join are to them *cieng cowyiman*, the people of my sister's husband, and *gaat nyal*, children of a female agnate, and *gaat wara*, children of the father's sister. A man who changes his residence thus becomes a member of a different community and enters into intimate relations with the dominant lineage of that community. When a GAATHEK man said to me, 'Now that I have come to settle in *Cieng* Kwoth I am a man of *Cieng* Kwoth', he meant that outside ceremonial situations he identified himself with the KWOTH lineage rather than with his own.

613 Even one man is a potential lineage and several brothers even
621 more so. A minimal, and then a minor, lineage comes into being which has only ritual status towards the other lineages of its clan, whereas with the people in whose village and district its members have grown up it has a mutuality of interests and a community of experience. The group thus develops into a distinct lineage. It intermarries with the other people of its home and very often it intermarries so frequently with the dominant lineage of the district that further marriage between them becomes impossible without breaking incest regulations. In this way lineages twine around one another and a texture of agnatic relationships unites all members of the community. Only a few such lineages establish themselves and survive as lineages. Many either die out or lose much of their individuality

8:Howell E, G-5 (1942-1944)1954
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'Ghost-Marriage'

It is an accepted rule among the Nuer that if a man dies before he is married or dies without male issue one of his kinsmen, often his brother, must marry to him a wife. This is one of the strongest mutual obligations of kinship.[1] It is considered essential that a man should have an heir who can carry on his name and 'keep it green' in order to further the interests of the lineage in posterity. To die without male issue amounts to oblivion. Female children do not count since their offspring belong to their husbands' lineages, as in any patrilineal society.

This obligation of kinship is nearly always carried out when sufficient cattle are available. Failure to observe the obligation would mean restlessness on the part of the dead man's spirit, who would bring evil (*nieŋ*)[2] upon his kinsmen.

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The main characteristics of 'ghost-marriage' are as follows:

(1) It is the dead man, to whose name the wife is married, who is considered the legal father of the children. The ritual processes of marriage are performed in his name, and the bridewealth is paid on his behalf. Therefore, while *Lo* is not the physiological father of the children, he is their legal father, and it is from his name that they trace their descent.

(2) The man who marries a wife to the name of his dead kinsman is father in all roles and in every respect the husband of the woman except in the strictly legal sense.

(3) The physiological father fulfils all the domestic duties of husband and father. In this respect the characteristics are the same as in a normal legal union, and it is only by enquiry that his true legal status can be discovered.

(4) On enquiry, though not in normal circumstances, the wife will be called *cieŋ jiookɛ*, 'ghost-wife', and the children will be called *guut jiookɛ*, 'children of a ghost'.

(5) Since the husband is a substitute for his dead kinsman and performs all ritual and domestic obligations on his behalf, the features of a simple legal marriage are found in the structure of this form of union.

(6) The behaviour and obligations of the pro-husband are indistinguishable from those of a man who is both legal and physiological husband and father.

For purposes of definition, the legal father of children will be referred to as *pater* and the physiological father as *genitor*. The difference therefore between a simple legal family and a 'ghost family' is that

[1] The Nuer expression is *ke dimaar kaan cieŋ*, lit. 'he his brother married a wife'.
[2] Cross-reference illegible.

8:Howell E, G-5 (1942-1944)1954
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query and is an abstract idea which they cannot explain in terms of specific examples; but this does not cause confusion to them because, although all aspects of their religion are an indirect extension of the idea of *kwoth*, there is a special terminology which refers to every kind of manifestation and category.

For example, there are, as will be seen later, *kolangni*, special spiritual forms which come into the possession of and possess individuals or kinship groups, and of these there are many different types of manifestation. They are often the cause of physical illness or misfortune. A particular individual may be subject to epileptic fits or periods of mental instability, and speaking in general terms the Nuer will say *nke kwoth*, 'he has or is possessed by *kwoth*'; but they will usually go further and qualify this statement by saying that he is possessed by some particular manifestation of *kwoth* which has a definite name. In some cases the individual will have called upon himself evil effects (though the same spirit may equally bring beneficial effects) in angering the spirit by some action, or more probably by failure to carry out some ritual obligation. There are special functionaries whose duty, in return for fees paid, usually in cattle, is first to diagnose the cause of the trouble and then to suggest a remedy, often assisting in the ritual which follows.

Kwoth is sometimes spoken of in the rôle of creator, but creation is more often explained in mythology by reference to ancestors. Such ancestors are not consciously thought of as manifestations of *kwoth*, although their origin would be explained as *kwoth*.[1] Ancestors are intermediaries between man and God; prayer is offered through them to *kwoth*. There is therefore a close relation between the concept of *kwoth* and religious practices associated with a patrilineal descent group. The word *thok* is used to express the idea of respect to ancestral spirits, and also, by extension, respect for kinship relations. Misfortunes and illness, sometimes referred to as *nueer*, are often believed to be caused by ancestral spirits who are angered on account of a breach of observance—such as neglect of prayers, which should be addressed to them—or by actual relations between living descendants. An offensive action against a kinsman demands not only some compensation in the form of apology or even material indemnification but also prayer and expiation. There is therefore a religious sanction for kinship obligations and observances.[2]

[1] E.g. when asking Nuer to relate their genealogies, one often finds that they get stuck at a particular ancestor—and there is, of course, always an ancestor beyond whom they cannot go. Pressed for an answer they will simply say that this man came from *kwoth*.

[2] *Thok*. A full explanation of the word *thok* is given in an article by Professor Evans-Pritchard in *Man*, Vol. XLIX, 96, 1949. He says: 'We can therefore perhaps best think of *thok* as a term indicating a category of ritual prohibition or taboo, and of *nyar* as a term commonly used both for the infringement and the sanction of this class of taboo.' My own view is that *thok* implies not only negative action in the form of prohibition or avoidance but also positive action in carrying out some observance or duty.

10:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931-1936) 1940
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613 to a certain group and not a member of it in relation to a different group. Lineages are thus essentially relative groups, like tribal sections, and, like them, also are dynamic groups. Therefore they can only be described satisfactorily in terms of values and situations.

613 Nuer lineages are not corporate localized communities though
621 their members often have an association with a locality and speak of the locality as though it were an exclusive agnatic group. Every Nuer village is associated with a lineage, and though the members of it often comprise a small proportion of the community, it is identified with them in such a way that we may speak of it as an aggregate of persons clustered around an agnatic nucleus. The aggregate is linguistically identified with the nucleus by the designation of the village community by the name of the lineage. It is only in reference to rules of exogamy and certain ritual activities that one needs to regard lineages as completely autonomous groups. In social life generally, they function within local communities, of all sizes from the village to the tribe, and as part of them. We cannot here discuss the ways by which residential groups become a network of kinship ties—marriage, adoption, and various fictions—but the result tends to be that a local group is a cognatic cluster round an agnatic core, the rules of exogamy being the operating principle in this tendency.

614 Nuer clans are everywhere much dispersed, so that in any village or camp one finds representatives of diverse clans. Small lineages have moved freely over Nuerland and have settled here and there and have aggregated themselves to agnatically unrelated elements in local communities. Migration and the absorption of Dinka have been circumstances favouring the dispersal and mixture of clans. Being a conquering, pastoral people and not [769] having an ancestral cult, the Nuer have never been bound to any particular spot by necessity or sentiment.

Nevertheless, there is a straight relation between political structure and the clan system, for a clan, or a maximal lineage, is associated with each tribe, in which it occupies a dominant position among other agnatic groups. Moreover, each of its segments tends to be associated with a segment of the tribe in such a way that there is a correspondence, and often a linguistic identification, between the parts of a clan and the parts of a tribe. Thus if we compare Diagrams II and III, and suppose clan A to be the dominant clan in tribe B, then maximal lineages B and C correspond to primary

[1 See p. 282, cat. 116 - Analysis]
[2 See p. 288, cat. 286 - Analysis]

776 782 there is no reason why they should see one. God is not a particular air-spirit but the spirit is a figure of God. So while in a sacrifice one can say that the oblation is made to *deng* and not to *wiu*, *mani*, or any other spirit of the air, one cannot say that it is not made to God. The spirits are not each other but they are all God in different figures. Consequently, if one asks a Nuer whether a sacrifice is to God or to a spirit of the air the question makes no sense to him. Nuer pass without difficulty or hesitation from a more general and comprehensive way of conceiving of God or Spirit to a more particular and limited way of conceiving of God or Spirit and back again. This is often very apparent in invocations made at their sacrifices and in what they say in times of sickness and other troubles. Therefore a queston which tries to present a disjunction, an either . . . or, in answer to which either one proposition or the other may be accepted but not both, is not understood.

776 It is in the nature of the conception of Spirit that it can be thought of in this sort of way, that what is distributed in a number of beings is, though different, yet the same and, though divided, yet a whole. Therefore, what has been said in this respect about the conception of God in relation to the conception of spirits of the air can also be said of the spirits of the air themselves. *Deng* has several forms but they are all the same *deng*, and *deng* may be in a number of different prophets at the same time, each of whom is *deng*, without *deng* being in any way divided.

V

776 769 Another sort of spirits which are regarded as spirits of the above in contrast to those of the below are the *colwic*, spirits which were once persons. These persons were struck by lightning or, more rarely, disappeared in a whirlwind; and some Nuer included also persons found dead in the bush without the cause of death being apparent. They are conceived as having been, as we would say, metamorphosed. The human has been changed into the divine. *Tie*, soul, has become *kwoth*, spirit. Nuer think of these persons as having been 'taken by God into the sky' and they say that there are multitudes of such spirits in the sky. Their names are for the most part forgotten in course of time but a few become tutelary spirits of lineages and are for that reason remembered. Such a

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
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kwoth gool, spirit of a lineage, is called on for aid, especially, I was told, by a man seeking refuge from enemies pursuing him. Most lineages seem to have at least one *colwic* patron spirit, to which cows are dedicated and their bull calves sacrificed. In their role of patrons of lineages they are similar to the totemic spirits, which I discuss in the following chapter, but they are treated in the present place, and not with the totemic spirits, partly because in other respects they obviously lack what are usually regarded as totemic characteristics, but chiefly because they are spoken about by Nuer as spirits of the above whereas totemic spirits are spirits of the below.

Although each *colwic* spirit, so long as it is remembered, retains its individuality in relation to its family and lineage, all of them are also conceived of as merged in God or in his hypostasis of *col*, the air-spirit of lightning. I have heard it said that *col* is black-haired and that this is the reason for calling a person killed by lightning a *colwic*. This suggestion, which is not entirely satisfactory grammatically, may have been put forward by the Nuer I was conversing with as a piece of *ad hoc* etymology deemed adequate to satisfy my curiosity,[1] but whether this is so or not, the first part of the word, *col*, means 'dark', and the spirit to which the word also refers is a spirit of storms; so in the word *colwic* there is an association of some kind with darkness and the suggestion made to me shows that Nuer are conscious of this.

Many people are killed by lightning, as memorials erected in their honour in villages bear witness, and it is therefore not surprising that Nuer are anxious when violent storms break over their homes and the sky is pierced by flashes of lightning. Then there is silence in the byres and one may see old men throw pieces of tobacco from the doorways into the storm, uttering a simple prayer, such as 'ah God, father, take this tobacco [or they may say "ox"]. I have paid thee ransom (*kok*) father [with this offering].

[1] Miss Soule informed Professor and Mrs. Seligman (op. cit., p. 158) that the expression is *colwic*, 'owl of the village community'. Father Crazzolara (op. cit., pp. 97-98) writes *colwic*, gen. *colwec*, but he does not give a literal translation of the expression. In my opinion the second syllable of the word is *wic*, gen. *wec*, 'head', and not *wei*, gen. *wic*, 'cattle-camp' or 'community'. Dr. Mary Smith tells me that she has heard Nuer speak of *colduar* in reference to a person killed by lightning in the bush (*diar*), though *colwic* is also used. On the other hand, some Nuer told her that people killed by lightning are called *colwic* because they do not have their heads shaved after death, as other people do. Clearly the syllables which compose the word have no definite meaning for Nuer.

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
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775 of the departed. On such occasions Nuer usually have a definite
782 ghost in mind, but in contexts in which the lineage as a whole is involved they may speak of *jook diel*, all the ghosts (of their lineage), though I have seldom heard them do so; and the reason for this is that when, on ceremonial occasions, Nuer speak of a lineage as a collectivity to which both dead and living belong they speak in terms of Spirit rather than of ghosts, of '*kwoth* which created our ancestor', rather than of the ancestor himself, and of '*kwoth* of our fathers', rather than the fathers themselves. The conception of the ghosts is subordinated to that of Spirit.

775 Nuer do not pray (*pai*) to the ghosts, which have no power in
782 themselves to grant requests. On such occasions as I have men-
776 tioned they may invoke (*lam*) them, but even when they do this the ghosts take second place to God in some such phrases as '*kwoth, yene jook*', 'God, thou and the ghosts'. Even when beasts are reserved for them, Nuer do not formally dedicate them to the ghosts as they do to their spirits, and though they sacrifice on certain occasions on their behalf or in their honour or memory, I do not think that it can be said that sacrifice *is* ever made to them, at any rate not to them by themselves, for it may be that in those sacrifices in which God and the ghosts are invoked together Nuer think of the sacrifice being to both. Even if this is so, the victim is consecrated to God and not to the ghosts. Likewise,
[778] though the ghosts are associated with the *riek* or post-shrine which elderly men erect in their homes, it is a shrine firstly to God as God of the hearth and in whatever further refractions he may be figured as the guardian of the family and lineage. It is therefore called *riek kwoth*, God's shrine, and not *riek jookni*, ghosts'
• [264] shrine. There is no cult of the dead, and their graves, not being marked, are soon forgotten unless a tree happens to spring from the tomb, when it may be named after the man buried there. A man's memorial is not in some monument but in his sons.

768 Dead persons, though for the most part only men, are remem-
613 bered in their names, and this is a matter of great importance
551 both for the Nuer themselves and also for an understanding on our part of their sentiments. Every man likes to feel that his name will never be forgotten so long as his lineage endures and that in that sense he will always be a part of the lineage. Consequently, Nuer do not so much think of the ghosts of their forebears as being those members of their lineage who are in the home of the dead,